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but there is no reason to suppose that they are due to degeneracy or a modern neglect of old social laws. The above facts relate to the Aiga, and although this tribe has long been under Government control and has sent many boys to indentured labour, it has never had white residents among it and has not been under a missionary. I cannot see, therefore, what new influences as yet should have broken down the old marriage restrictions, such as they were, among the Aiga tribe.

It may be mentioned that there is in native life always a certain degree of local endogamy following as a necessary result from the tribal enmities which make it dangerous for a man to go too far afield. Among the Orokaiva, however, where the tribes are very large, this is less pronounced than in some other parts of the Territory, and it cannot have given rise to that degree of inbreeding which is found in those parts and which has been by some so seriously regarded.

Courtship. Young children are sometimes betrothed by their parents. This transaction is called *kerari*, and from the beginning the boy's father will make continual presents of food to the girl's people, by which he lays them under an obligation. The *kerari*, while perfectly regular, is relatively uncommon. Witnesses have said that it invariably implies an exchange, i.e. the adult parties to the transaction each have both a boy and a girl at their disposal. Consequently the gifts of food are in the ordinary instance reciprocal. The *kerari* betrothal will probably reach a happy ending in marriage, but it is always subject to a sudden alteration when a pubescent girl or boy begins to show wayward preferences. It is said that a parent will urge his daughter to marry the boy she is pledged to without undue delay, for fear she should take a fancy to some other and let her father down by decamping.

One is happy to say, however, that courtship usually takes a more romantic form than that of child betrothal. There is a word with a somewhat intriguing sound, viz. *kigi*, which implies clandestine meetings and love-making in the bush. A boy will go to where he knows a girl is at work in

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584 the garden, and hiding himself in the bush nearby, will break a dry twig in his fingers, so as to make just enough noise to attract her private attention. The word *kigi* would seem to apply specifically to this trick. Another way is to make the noise between lips and teeth which by ourselves is commonly associated with kissing, but which bears no such implication to the Orokaiva girl at work in the garden, as she is ignorant of this kind of blandishment. Again, in a man's *betava* I have seen an article called *bohiva* which resembles a seed-pod but which is really a receptacle made by an insect for holding and hatching its eggs. It is dry and empty, and when pressed makes a clicking noise like a ping-pong ball. It is used expressly for *kigi*, and a little girl of eight or nine was covered with the prettiest confusion when the *bohiva* was pressed before her.

Sometimes, as we shall see, a youth and girl elope, and in that event we may assume that their previous meetings and love-makings are mostly in secret. But when there is no likely objection to the marriage, he will visit her from time to time by night in her father's house. He knows exactly where to find her, and as the matter has been prearranged he is not likely to meet with a rebuff. There is no [836] actual prohibition against sexual intercourse before marriage, but it is nevertheless regarded as the proper thing for the young couple to abstain. It may seem unlikely that they do abstain, but nevertheless it has been so frequently and consistently asserted that the boy and his sweetheart sleep 'for nothing' that one must believe that the statement is at least partly true. It is quite unlikely that young men, when they realize that their questioner has nothing censorious in his attitude, should endeavour to conceal from him what they know is a matter of indifference. I am therefore convinced that there is some truth in the constant assertion of my informants that a great deal of the love-making, even the 'sleeping together', is, as we should call it, innocent.

It has been rather shrewdly suggested to me that when a youth has been courting a girl for some time, he will seduce her in order to nail her affections the more securely, and will subsequently marry her. Illegitimate children are

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Illegitimate children are rare 584 [848]

rare. It is said to be the custom to do away with them, though this is certainly not invariable.

Except of course in the case of *kerari* there is no necessity for a 'long engagement'. In one instance a girl had asked her sweetheart to take her away and marry her quickly, as she feared that if the matter were delayed some other boy might come along and disjoin her affections from him.

An Orokaiva youth is not put to the necessity of waiting till his income is adequate to matrimony. There are no expenses of upkeep in an Orokaiva household, and it is solely a question of furnishing a bride-price, for which he will be able to draw upon his father and his sympathetic clansmen.

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Marriage Ceremonies. The actual ceremonies of marriage—such as they are—depend in some degree upon the nature of the transaction. In most cases of capture and elopement there are naturally enough no rites celebrating the first cohabitation of husband and wife: the former simply appropriates the latter or entices her to his home. In the instances—frequent as they are—where the bride's people withhold their consent or are taken by surprise, they will come in force next morning to the village to abuse husband and wife, and they may even endeavour to drag the latter away. On one occasion I saw a runaway bride very roughly handled by the women of her own village and finally led away, stripped and weeping, to her home. But in the usual instance it appears that this visit from the outraged people of the bride is nothing more than a form. They make a pretence of dragging away the woman, but they really acquiesce with a bad grace in her remaining. Thus an elderly woman of Korisata tells how she clung to a corner of her husband's house when her own people came to remove her by force. Her people returned without her and, as in all such cases, received payment in due course.

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Where the bride's people do not actually lay hands on her, they may content themselves with vituperating her husband. Sometimes he is subjected to indignities of a more tangible nature. Endeavouring on one occasion to elicit something about marriage ceremonies, I began by telling my informants of the pretty customs of throwing rice and